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ABSTRACT

Drawing upon extensive theoretical knowledge and decades of empirical research, this book traces changes in the structure and content of self-representations from early childhood through late adolescence. Chapter 1 includes a discussion of the self as subject (I-self) and object (Me-self) and describes the historical roots of contemporary issues involving self-development. Attention is first devoted to cognitive-developmental processes that represent I-self changes, which impact developmental differences in the nature of the Me-self in childhood (Chapter 2) and adolescence (Chapter 3). Chapter 4 examines developmental differences, focusing on self-affects such as pride, shame, and guilt as cognitive and social constructions. Chapter 5 examines the content, valence, and organization of self-evaluative judgments. Chapter 6 explores how the discrepancy/congruence between ideal and real self-concepts determines one's overall sense of worth. Chapter 7 deals with child-rearing practices leading to individual differences in the valence of self-attributes against a backdrop of models specifying how others' opinions are internalized. Chapter 8 presents a broader model of causes and consequences of self-worth, especially the constellation of negative consequences associated with low self-worth evident in depression. Chapter 9 focuses on factors leading to self-representations judged to be false, highlighting the inability to voice one's opinions. Chapter 10 deals with how abusive experiences with caregivers compromises the functionality of numerous I-self and Me-self functions. Chapter 11 discusses healthy adaptation as an integration of autonomy and connectedness. Chapter 12 deals with practical applications, including conceptual and methodological issues, in considering interventions to promote self-evaluations that involve both cognitive and social processes. Contains over 700 references. (KB)